

## Message Text

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51

ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02 L-03 NSC-10

PA-03 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 OMB-01 AID-20 PC-04 OPR-02

RSR-01 /128 W

----- 017631

R 211800 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1838

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 2860

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

REF: MANAGUA 2847

1. JUNE 20 NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS UNION ( SCAAS) AND THE CONSTRUCTION CHAMBER HELD AT THE LABOR MINISTRY WERE RECESSED UNTIL JUNE 21 WHEN AN IMPASSE WAS REACHED IN THE TALKS. NONE OF THE PARTIES IN THE DISPUTE HAS YET MADE A FORMAL PROPOSAL ON WAGES. THE STRIKE HAS HALTED ALMOST ALL LARGE SCALE CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY IN MANAGUA.

2. THE CONSTRUCTION CHAMBER INSISTS THAT NEGOTIATIONS REGARDING A NEW COLLECTIVE CONTRACT AND WAGE INCREASES CAN NOT TAKE PLACE WHILE SCAAS IS ON STRIKE. THE CHAMBER IS WILLING TO SIGN A DOCUMENT PROMISING TO SIGN A NEW COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT INCLUDING A WAGE INCREASE WITHIN SIXTY DAYS TO MEET SCAAS' S FEARS THAT NEGOTIATIONS ARE SIMPLY A PRETEXT TO PROLONG  
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THE CURRENT WAGE SCALE.

3. SCAAS DEMANDS IMMEDIATE SETTLEMENT OF THE WAGE ISSUE WHILE EXPRESSING A WILLINGNESS TO RETURN TO WORK WHILE NEGOTATING OTHER PROVISIONS OF A COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT.

4. ACTING MINISTER OF LABOR MUNIZ OTERO HAS DECLARED THE STRIKE ILLEGAL SINCE IT FAILS TO MEET THE RIGID REQUIREMENTS OF THE LABOR CODE. HE CONTINUES TO MEDIATE THE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN SCAAS AND THE CONSTRUCTION CHAMBER. HE EXPRESSED CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM TO AN EMBASSY OFFICER JUNE 20, POINTING OUT THAT NEGOTIATIONS ARE BEING HELD DAILY EVEN IF AGREEMENT SEEMS DISTANT. MUNIZ CLAIMS TO HAVE WARNED SCAAS THAT ITS SUCCESSES TO DATE SHOULD NOT BE INTERPRETED AS A SIGN OF WEAKNESS ON THE PART OF THE GON OR THE CHAMBER OF CONSTRUCTION.

5. MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT LEANDRO MARIN' S HEAVY HANDED ATTEMPT DURING THE ABSENCE OF GENERAL SOMOZA TO END PRESS COVERAGE OF THE STRIKE FIRST THROUGH A TELEPHONE CALL TO OWNER- EDITOR PEDRO JUAQUIN CHAMORRO OF OPOSITION LA PRENSA AND LATER IN FORMAL LETTERS DIRECTED TO BOTH LA PRENSA AND EL CENTRO- AMERICANO QUICKLY FADED FROM THE FRONT PAGES AS THE STRIKE INTENSIFIED AND BOTH NEWSPAPER CONTINUED THEIR EXTENSIVE COVERAGE. THERE HAS BEEN NO TALK OF PRESS CENSORSHIP SINCE SOMOZA' S RETURN.

6. SOMOZA, IN A PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH THE CHARGE, SHOWED CONSIDERABLE IRRITATION WITH THE CONSTRUCTION CHAMBER FOR ALLOWING ITS LABOR RELATIONS TO REACH THEIR CURRENT LOW POINT AND SEEMED SYMPATHETIC TO THE WORKERS' DEMANDS FOR HIGHER WAGES. HE IMPLIED THAT THE GON WOULD HAVE TO INTERVENE HEAVILY IN THE NEGOTIATIONS IF THE DEADLOCK IS PROLONGED.  
WARNER

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